

New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee

1965-2015







Message From the Chair:

Budget Priorities

Greetings!

As the school year begins around the state, it makes me reflect on my own experiences as a student. Next spring will mark 25 years from when I graduated from high school. My high school graduating class, the Class of 1991, holds a dubious distinction – we were the last class of students for whom the average share of state General Fund appropriations going to public education exceeded 50 percent. It's only 44.3 percent for the current school year.

Just like any parent, I want my own children to have greater opportunities than I did growing up. That is why I am concerned that other demands on the state budget, including the rising cost of Medicaid, might deprive New Mexico's children of the funding needed to ensure they receive a worldclass education.

Money isn't everything in education, but we can't keep asking our public schools to do more with less. There is a limit to how many schools can be closed, how many programs can be cut, and how many additional, unpaid roles we can place on our teachers and school administrators. On the revenue side, our public schools cannot charge tuition, and they should not increase taxes at the local level, which hurts the families we're trying to help and makes it harder for students to find jobs when they graduate.

My fear, as a parent and as an educator, is that we will compromise the ability of public schools to provide the quality education that is constitutionally guaranteed to our children if we do not address these realities soon. I have hope, though, that there will be broad, bipartisan support for one clear solution: the Legislature must prioritize existing revenue and projected growth in its budget for public education.

In the next budget, we might not be able to make progress toward the goal of giving our children more than their parents had, but we surely can't afford to move backwards. The alternatives are unacceptable for our state and our children.

Sincerely,

Representative Dennis J. Roch Chair

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2015 LESC MEETING SCHEDULE

July 21-22 Rio Rancho High School Rio Rancho

August 27-28 Eastern NM University Roswell

September 24-25 Western NM University Silver City

October 28-30 State Capitol Santa Fe

November 18-20 State Capitol Santa Fe

December 16-18 State Capitol Santa Fe

January 18, 2016 State Capitol, TBA Santa Fe



RIO RANCHO MEETING TESTIMONY

WHAT

You Need to Know About In the July Agenda Topics...

Teacher and School Leader Preparation:

- ✓ Since as early as 2011, the Public Education Department has sent teams of New Mexico school leaders and central office staff to the University of Virginia's School Turnaround Specialist Program (UVA-STSP), an executive leadership program aimed at helping to improve low-performing schools.
- ✓ Although the UVA-STSP has demonstrated success during the years that New Mexico schools have participated, members of the Legislature and interested stakeholders have expressed support for a similar program to be created in New Mexico, utilizing in-state higher education institutions, asserting that a home-grown program would be more effective in supporting teachers in such a culturally diverse state.

New Mexico Reads to Lead!:

During the 2015 legislative session, \$15 million was appropriated for FY 16 to fund New Mexico Reads to Lead!, the state's early reading initiative, to provide expectations and supports for early literacy interventions such as:

- ✓ an increase in quality of reading instruction;
- ✓ a K-3 screening assessment to use for planning data-driven instruction;
- ✓ ensuring that districts and charter schools have a comprehensive plan for addressing literacy instruction; and
- ✓ outreach support for parents and families with resources in English and Spanish.

Public School Funding — Instructional Materials and Training & Experience Index:

- ✓ In both the June and July 2015 interim meetings, the LESC heard issues and concerns related to current funding provisions in law related to the Instructional Material Law and the Instructional Staff Training and Experience Index.
- ✓ The committee anticipates continued input from education stakeholders statewide prior to the 2016 legislative session.
- ✓ In the 2015 interim, an LESC and LFC workgroup, consisting of members appointed by each respective committee chair, will examine potential policy changes in current law for consideration by the 2016 Legislature.

Rio Rancho Public Schools (RRPS): For school year 2013-2014 -

- grades 3, 4 and 8 standards-based assessment (SBA) scores indicate that:
 - ✓ 60-70 percent of RRPS students are proficient or advanced readers; and
 - ✓ 50-55 percent of RRPS students are proficient or advanced in math;
- with regard to graduation testing, out of 1,220 eligible students:
 - ✓ 982 students, or 80.5 percent, passed the reading, math, and science competency requirements by passing the High School Graduation Assessment; and
 - ✓ 34 students, or 2.8 percent, received a Certificate of Completion; however, many of these students enrolled in the district's Secondary Learning Center to receive a Diploma of Excellence.

New Mexico Reads to Lead!: Representatives from Albuquerque Public Schools; Bernalillo Public Schools; Belen Consolidated Schools; and Rio Rancho Public Schools discussed uses of Reads to Lead! (RTL) funding at the local level in urban schools.

For FY 15, it was reported that RTL funding supported elementary reading coach and interventionist positions; the purchase of research-based programs and curriculum and instruction materials; stipends and substitute costs; district administrator positions to provide ongoing support to reading coaches; and professional development opportunities, including summer reading training for K-3 teachers with a focus on strategies for teaching English-language learners.

With regard to improvement for FY 16, district staff noted a focus on the Common Core State Standards for reading and grade 3 data analysis; evidence of student learning through the collaborative teaching learning cycle; the integration of math and literature supplemental materials; and the implementation of virtual coaching with narrated video.

Referring to district challenges, district staff emphasized that positions are difficult to fill because they are "grant" positions which refers to short-term positions with uncertainty for future funding.

Alternative Reading Intervention Programs:

MATCH New Mexico: Testimony from MATCH New Mexico staff indicated that this initiative assists students in grade 3 with reading skills so that they can be at grade-level for future learning, and provides them with a caring, consistent mentor to support students with learning deficits and to provide positive feedback. Testimony indicated that the MATCH initiative is seeking funds to provide a stipend of \$1,500 per semester to 20,000 college students; salaries to select, train and supervise mentors; transportation; educational materials; support services, which include monitoring and evaluation; and educational and research consultants on occasion.

Albuquerque Public Schools (APS): APS staff reported that the district implemented Fundations® as a preventative early literacy intervention model in order to provide K-3 classroom professional development. Reporting that there is no single funding source for the Fundations® program; staff noted that the district combines funding from numerous sources to leverage dollars for the best benefit of students, namely: the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars provides seed money for program start-up; the General Fund pays for general education teacher salaries; and the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA-B) funding supports training for teachers. She noted that IDEA-B provisions allow dollars to be spent on general education students in order to prevent academic failure.

RIO RANCHO MEETING TESTIMONY

Alternative Reading Intervention Programs — continued

Lottery Student Community Outreach Pilot Project: During the 2015 legislative session, HB 460, Study Lottery Tuition Recipient Mentoring (Laws 2015, Chapter 84), was enacted. Beginning in the fall of 2016, the bill establishes the "Lottery Student Community Outreach Pilot Project" as a six-year study that encourages students who receive the Legislative Lottery Tuition Scholarship to volunteer and provide community outreach, chiefly through mentoring public school students

As sponsor of the legislation, Representative Patricio Ruiloba reported that among its provisions, this legislation requires the Higher Education Department (HED) to administer the pilot project along with at least three public postsecondary educational institutions.

HED staff reported that the department is working together with Representative Ruiloba to implement the pilot program, and noted that HED has indentified GEAR Up, a federally funded program, as an appropriate fit for a mentoring program.

Teacher and School Leader Preparation: Public Education Department (PED) staff reported that approximately \$1.6 million was appropriated to the department in FY 16 to establish programs that feature higher admission standards for teacher preparation programs; practice-based curriculum and training programs designed to require significantly less time than traditional preparation programs; coaching support for new teachers during their first two years of teaching; and financial aid to address monetary barriers to entering the classroom.

The department also reported that \$2.9 million was appropriated in FY 16 to establish programs that feature training focused on leadership competencies; a practice-based curriculum; financial aid to allow students to participate in a full-time practicum; and coaching and mentorship support for new principals.

Finally, PED staff noted that school turnaround programming grants initiated this spring will continue through August; application for funds to establish school turnaround programming will open in August; and announcement of awardees will commence in October.

University of New Mexico staff discussed the collaboration between the UNM Anderson School of Management, the UNM College of Education, Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Foundation, and the Daniels Fund to develop a 40-hour MBA in educational leadership program, which includes the following district partners: Native American Community Academy; APS Chief Academic Officer; APS Director of Innovation; and Gallup McKinley County Schools.

NMSU staff addressed the process of the school turnaround planning grant at NMSU by explaining that two principal investigators and 18 stakeholders were recruited to discuss

turnaround issues relevant to New Mexico. The planning goal, they noted, is to develop a multi-year program that assists with data turnaround; improves leadership capacity and commitment to critical change; draws on expertise from the Colleges of Business and Education; and aligns with numerous standards called for in the request for application.

Teacher Preparation: During the 2015 regular legislative session, legislation was enacted to amend the *School Personnel Act*, effective July 1, 2016, to change the minimum educational requirements for persons seeking licensure or reciprocity in elementary, special, early childhood, or secondary education; and increase the student teaching requirement.

Among its provisions, SB 329aa reduced the arts and sciences semester credit hour requirement to 41 (from 57) as outlined in the table below.

Prior Course Requirements	Course Requirements Effective July 1, 2016
12 hours: English	9 hours: communication
12 hours: history, including American history and western civilization	6 hours: mathematics
9 hours: mathematics for elementary education and 6 hours in mathematics for secondary education	8 hours: laboratory science
6 hours: government, economics, or sociology	9 hours: social and behavioral science
12 hours: science, including biology, chemistry, physics, geology, zoology, and botany	9 hours: humanities and fine arts
6 hours: fine arts	
Total: 54-57 semester hours	Total: 41 semester hours

Other provisions increased the pre-licensure supervised student teaching requirement to 16 weeks (from 14 weeks), except for licensure by reciprocity.

Testimony provided to the committee by Central New Mexico College; New Mexico Highlands University; Northern New Mexico College; and the University of New Mexico indicated that the provisions of SB 329aa would allow for the alignment of general education core requirements to the state core requirements; all CoEs will begin implementing the new requirements in August; and reducing the semester credit hour requirement would allow students to finish their coursework before running out of financial support.

Additional testimony related to teacher pre-service training was heard from a researcher from the Education Commission of the States. Referring to a PowerPoint handout, *Enhancing Teacher Pre-service Clinical Training*, the researcher reported that the pre-service training is referred to in a number of terms, i.e., clinical practice or field experience, student teaching, residencies, observations, and internships; however, a review of research indicates there is little evidence on the effectiveness of this initiative as it relates to student performance.

Teacher Preparation — continued

What is known, the researcher explained, is that effectiveness improves over time based on the level of supervision by a preparation program; time spent in field work before teaching; and length of a field experience.

As an example of a university program that incorporates enhanced clinical training to their students, the researcher noted that the University of Texas at Austin requires 320 hours of field experience in what is termed a "stair or two-step program" consisting of 45 hours in Step 1: Inquiry Approaches to Teaching; and the remaining 275 hours in Step 2: Inquiry-based Lesson Planning, which includes both observation and teaching hours in "Classroom Interactions," "Project-based Instruction," and "Apprentice Teaching."

School Transportation: For this agenda item, LESC and PED staff discussed recent school transportation initiatives, including:

House Bill 164a, School Transportation Info Reporting (Laws 2015, Chapter 57), which was enacted during the 2015 legislative session — LESC staff explained that among its provisions, HB 164a amended the Public School Finance Act related to transportation distributions, effective July 1, 2015, to change the reporting dates of each year for school districts and state-chartered charter schools from the first reporting date (which is the second Wednesday in October) to the average of the second and third reporting dates (which are, respectively, December 1, or the first working day in December, and the second Wednesday in February).

A comparison of the FY 15 final transportation allocation to FY 16 initial transportation allocation – LESC staff reported that:

- 68 school districts and five state-chartered charter schools will see a reduction of approximately \$8.0 million from the final FY 15 transportation funding formula allocation to the FY 16 initial transportation allocation;
- conversely, 22 school districts and 15 state-chartered charter schools had the initial transportation funding formula allocation increase by approximately \$2.0 million;
- of the 15 state-chartered charter schools receiving an increase:
 - √ eight are new state-chartered charter schools beginning operations in FY 16; and
 - ✓ the other seven schools will receive new transportation funding formula allocations totaling approximately \$832,000.

State-Chartered Charter Schools Transportation Revenues and Expenditures — Referring to the chart below, LESC staff reported that since 2009-2010 school transportation revenues for state-chartered charter schools appear to have exceeded expenditures at the end of each fiscal year.

Chart 1. STATE-CHARTERED CHARTER SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES, BY FISCAL YEAR



To conclude, LESC staff stated that for FY 16, language in the *General Appropriation Act of 2015* requires a state-chartered charter school that receives a transportation allocation that exceeds the amount required to provide to-and-from transportation to deposit 100 percent of the remaining balance in the Transportation Emergency Fund at the end of that fiscal year.

PED staff referred the committee to a handout outlining a 10 year history of school transportation appropriations. This handout revealed a \$4 million decrease in funding from \$101.7 million in school year 2014-2015 to \$97.7 million in school year 2015-2016 — a decrease that will impact allocations to many school districts and state-chartered charter schools statewide.

School Transportation Program Design: For a discussion of school transportation challenges in public schools, testimony was provided from a number of individuals representing public education stakeholders statewide, including school districts and state-chartered charter schools.

According to the testimony, student transportation issues affecting the state include:

- staffing issues related to school bus drivers and mechanics;
- fuel cost volatility;
- the quality of roads in rural, isolated school districts, which impacts bus warranties, bus replacement schedules, and the need for additional contracted mechanic services:
- road conditions that should be added as a site characteristic in the funding formula;
- transportation funding that does not consider unique charter school student populations, including English language learners and free and reduced lunch program eligible students;
- policy proposals to have the state purchase school buses for the transportation of state-chartered charter school students;
- budget concerns, including insufficient funding which results in the use of operational funds to subsidize transportation operations. *Continued on next page* —

School Transportation Program Design — continued

District staff also emphasized that Global Positioning Systems are a key component for gathering data to help with accurate reporting and student safety; however, funding is not available for smaller school districts. Other testimony indicated that bus cameras are an important part of ensuring a safe and disciplined learning environment; however, funding for the cameras is also not available for small districts.

To conclude, charter school representatives requested that the LESC evaluate school transportation processes to ensure equity for all district and charter school students receiving bus services.

LESC and Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) Staff Policy Recommendations/Options

Instructional Staff Training and Experience Index: For the July interim meeting, the committee requested LESC and LFC staff to outline policy recommendations and options originating from previous T&E staff reviews.

LESC staff reported that since the most recent funding formula study was conducted almost 10 years ago, the committee may wish to focus on the general features in considering T&E policy options, such as the licensure level and the dimensions for years of experience and educational attainment; which set of characteristics is assigned a baseline value of 1.0 in the T&E matrix; and the type of instructional staff to be included in the calculation of T&E.

In closing, LESC staff explained that, if T&E factors are considered that reflect the differential cost of employing instructional staff with varying characteristics, those factors would be sensitive to changes in statutory minimum salaries and the average salary growth rate.

LFC staff emphasized that for over a decade, the staff have identified numerous issues related to T&E for committee consideration. Beginning in 2011, they reported, LFC program evaluation staff began making specific recommendations, which can be classified into three main groups, namely, aligning the T&E Index with the three-tiered licensure system; enhancing uniformity by requiring PED to establish criteria for counting years of experience in rule; and targeting differences in classroom teacher labor costs, such as:

- defining "teaching staff" to mean a licensed teacher who is assigned classroom teaching responsibilities for inclusion in any new T&E Index;
- multiplying the revised, or even existing, T&E Index by early childhood education and basic education units only; and
- adding an adjustment factor for effective teachers and leaders at high-poverty schools to facilitate the payment of stipends to those educators.

Instructional Material: Based on the results of an LESC staff review of certain select components of the instructional material process, LESC staff listed three potential actions, based on the information presented, that the LESC and the LFC may wish to consider:

- when considering legislation authorizing the issuance of G.O. bonds to provide distributions to public schools statewide, ensure that the language clarifies whether the proceeds are for all public schools or selected public schools;
- require PED to provide an annual report to the committees outlining the department's administration of the *Instruc*tional Material Law and related PED rule, including certain requirements; and
- direct LESC and LFC staff to conduct a follow-up review of the instructional material process and provide a report with potential policy considerations.

LFC staff reported that in January 2014, LFC staff released a program evaluation on instructional materials that contained the following three key findings:

- the instructional materials process suffers from a lack of oversight, resulting in school districts and charter schools sometimes expending funds in ways inconsistent with state law;
- 2. the system for funding instructional materials, according to the report, does not meet current needs, resulting in inadequate resources and allocated money remaining unspent; and
- 3. New Mexico is unprepared for a transition to a personalized digital learning environment.

Staff recommendations for the committee to consider, they noted, were to:

- amend the *Instructional Material Law* to require that instructional materials funds be used on state approved materials on the multiple list, which includes both core/basal and supplemental materials;
- convert the Instructional Material Fund to a reverting fund or consider taking credit for unspent instructional materials allocations if substantial fund balances continue at school districts, charter schools, state supported schools, and private schools;
- modify statute mandating that adequate instructional materials be available to all students at school and at home;
- modify statute to require that all districts have a plan in place to ensure all students have adequate access to instructional materials; and
- direct PED to develop standards for all digital content, e-reader devices, electronic courses, and other technologies used for instruction.

RIO RANCHO MEETING TESTIMONY

Community and Superintendent Input: Dr. Anne Taylor, President of the School Zone Institute (SZI), a nonprofit organization in charge of the Architecture and Children Education Program at Eubank Elementary School in Albuquerque, provided the committee with an update on SZI activities.

She stated that this program was tested during a three-year pilot study of architecture and design education which examined how design education affects student learning of math and reading skills. Dr. Taylor mentioned that during the 2015 legislative session, HM 84a, *At-Risk Youth Design Programs*, was passed by the House of Representatives. The memorial, she noted, requested that PED explore funding options for the creation of design education programs for at-risk youth.

On behalf of SZI, Dr. Taylor requested funding for professional development of new teachers, workshop supplies, and stipends for architects, educators, and volunteers in order to expand the program.

AUGUST AGENDA TOPICS

- **Teacher Evaluations:** Staff from the Public Education Department (PED) will provide the committee with a comparison of teacher evaluation data from Year 1 and Year 2; the teacher evaluation appeals process and results; and licensure advancement and renewal procedures.
- New Mexico ChalleNGe Academy (NMYCA): The lead recruiter from NMYCA will update the committee on their 17.5 month program designed to reach the population of at-risk youth before they become a permanent fixture in juvenile prisons, adult prisons, or the welfare system.
- **2015** New Mexico Teacher of the Year: The LESC will honor Debra S. Minyard from Pojoaque High School and listen to her insights on quality education.
- **Teacher Evaluation Observation Protocol Training:** Staff from the Southern Regional Education Board will discuss techniques for administrators to improve their teacher observation skills.
- Student Growth Measures in Teacher Evaluations: The Director of Assessment, Analysis and Research for Las Cruces Public Schools will address a number of issues related to student growth, including value-added models, growth models, national trends, and the Measures of Effective Teaching Project.
- Reading Interventions in Rural Public Schools: LESC staff will provide the committee with a comparison of appropriations for the *New Mexico Reads to Lead!* (RTL) program in FY 15 versus FY 16; and three school districts and two regional education cooperatives will describe how RTL funding is used in rural public schools.
- August 2015 Consensus Revenue Estimate: The committee will discuss the most recent General Fund recurring revenue estimate for FY 17.

Legislative Education Study Committee

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